UNITY.

FREEDOM, FELLOWSHIP AND CHARACTER IN RELIGION.

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SIGNS OF UNITY.

J. L. Douthit, in his late Thanksgiving sermon, said that among the events of the year calling for thanks were many, showing "the prospect of enlarged fellowship and better acquaintance among all nations, all peoples, races and sects." Even while Mr. Douthit was saying it, the signs were increasing, for in several synagogues in the country, Jews and Unitarians were uniting in worship. On that day, in Philadelphia, Dr. Furness joined with Rabbi Gastrow, and in his sermon, said:

Here you and I stand upon common ground. How large the agreement! How small our differences! Here we meet, strangers though we be, as children of one Father, brothers and sisters of one household, In coming among you this day, am I false to my Christian profession? Do I turn away from Him by whose name I am called? Oh, no! I am brought nearer to Him, rather. For here I am among His kindred in the flesh, among the people to which He belonged, the people of His blood, of His race, the people, the pure spirit of whose ancient and most venerable faith lived and breathed in Him, whose religion in its purest form He exemplified. Not for anything preternatural in His nature do I honor Him, but for His exalted character; and where but in the bosom of the Hebrew nation could such a character have appeared. If we call that land holy over whose acres walked those blessed feet, with what reverence, with what a feeling of the sanctity of the place, should a Christian enter a synagogue, one of those places of worship which Jesus was accustomed to frequent! I thank you, friends, for the privilege I enjoy.

The grandest triumph of religion consists, not in bringing man to the profession of one form of faith, be it ever so true, not in being called all by the same name, but in teaching men of every form of faith so to respect one another that no form of faith shall disturb that respect. This is the religious work, by the way, which is being done in a thousand unacknowledged ways,—by railroads, telegraphs, ocean cables, and all our countless means of publication and intercourse. Men are being brought face to face, and are finding out that, notwithstanding all differences of language, of complexion, of customs and of religion, we are, after all, more alike than different, and that our different religious faiths are only so many various imperfect attempts to say the same thing. It is only when people are shut up in themselves, in their own little circles, that they are narrow-minded, intolerant of differences, regarding whatever is strange as hostile. Level their prison walls (and this is what our abundant means of communication are doing) and instantly their thoughts expand, and in strangers they recognize friends, brothers. They discover the family likeness everywhere, and they catch glimpses of the great fact, the unity of the human race, the brotherhood of mankind. Let us all, friends, thank God to-day, that here in this blessed land, at least, this great fact is being brought more and more fully to the front. . . Blessed be God for these free institutions under which some fifty millions of us are living in peace.

The same day Dr. Bellows joined with Rabbi Gottheil in the services in the Temple Emanuel, New York, and in concluding his sermon, said:—

"I have to thank this congregation for the practical evidence of toleration shown by them in inviting me, a Christian minister, to address them to-day. You are not orthodox Jews, and I am just as little willing to be considered an old-fashioned orthodox Christian, so you have not had a great way to extend your hand and I to extend mine; still it is far enough to have taken several centuries to do it, and I cannot but regard this invitation, and my acceptance of it, as of some historic significance. I do not think religions are going to be turned one into another, and all distinctions wiped out by toleration, but it is going to appear in a way that has never been possible until now, that God is himself tolerant, and that he has always allowed himself to be served by the true of heart and purpose, in spite of errors of opinion. It is gradually becoming plain that all historical religions adapt themselves to changes in the condition of society, and that old theories yield to new ones as life forces fresh facts on human attention. I love the Christian church, and especially my own—the Unitarian—branch, as I love my life, and I labor to make others think as I do, that it is the best; but I am too conscious of my own prejudices, weaknesses, and limited range of experience not to respect the preferences and opinions, if they be honest, of all other men I may meet. I do not expect to become a reformed Jew, or that you will become Unitarians or any other kind of christians; but we can all become better, more devout and righteous men and women, and those who fear God and work righteousness are his accepted children, and are brethren, even though they may not speak each other's language or accept each other's forms of religion."

The Kalamazoo (Mich.) *Gazette* also prints the Thanksgiving sermon of C. G. Howland (Unitarian) in the Jewish Temple there. Rabbi Viedever, of Evansville, Ind., also recently assisted J. Ll. Jones in a meeting at that place. And the new Unitarian church at Madison, Wis., has been doing as well all the year—its meetings being held in a Jewish synagogue, and counting Jews among their attendants and supporters.

And why not? The *Christian Register*, alluding

to some of the Thanksgiving meetings, finely says:

"In the deepest sense, Christianity and Judaism is identical. When the Jew finds what is at the heart of his religion, he will believe in Jesus and love and honor Him; and when the Christian finds what is at the heart of Christianity, he will say with Jesus, 'This is nothing but the fulfillment of the ancient law;' and Jew and Christian will strike hands with St. Augustine when he seems to merge both forms of faith in the natural religion, which was 'always in the world,' but has found in Christ its true exponent."

Rabbi Moses, of Milwaukee, has also contributed to *Unity* a paper on the co-operation of Jews and Unitarians, which is unavoidably crowded out of this number, but will appear in our next.

THE GROWTH OF DOCTRINE; OR, THE OLD-NEW CREED.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

XII.

EDWIN S. ELDER.

There is no more comprehensive expression than these two words, "Kingdom of God." I propose to call attention to the great faith and the great fact, old and ever new, for which these words stand. All words that represent enduring realities, the words God, Soul, Prayer, Heaven, differ as much in their signification as those who use them differ in mental, moral and spiritual development; or, to state it more accurately, these words derive their signification from those who use them. The phrase, Kingdom of God, meant very much more in the thought of Jesus than in the speech of some of his followers, just as to-day it stands for something greater in the thought of Martineau than in the words of an extravagant revivalist. It often happens that we become familiar with the lowest senses in which this phrase is used before we come in contact with or are able to appreciate its truest and most spiritual significance. By the Adventist, Calvinist and Unitarian, this same expression, Kingdom of God, and its equivalent, Kingdom of Heaven, are employed in very different senses. It is a matter for regret that so many become familiar with the cheaper significance attached to the great words of Christianity before they obtain a hint of their profound and enduring significance.

Much that passes for opposition or indifference to religion is to be attributed to the fact that the great words of religion are so often and so loudly used as the names of self-regarding sentiments and unworthy conceptions.

The greatest enemy of true religion is neither doubt nor denial, but immoral, unspiritual and false conceptions of those transcendant realities with which religion concerns itself, namely, Lord, Soul, Eter..al life, Heaven.

Let us inquire into the origin and significance of the phrase, Kingdom of God.

The Hebrews believed their government to be, in a special sense, a theocracy, Jehovah the creator of the world. He whose glory the heavens declared was their law-giver and ruler. Of all the nations of the earth, they were his particular care. They were the especial object of his regard and interest. The prophets identified the moral law with his will. The priests promised the people that, if they would worship Jehovah in a proper manner, they would surely obtain his favor.

There is no question but their faith in Jehovah as their king, law-giver and defender, was a resource of strength. It made them courageous in danger, patient in defeat, hopeful in adversity. They might be a handful, their enemies a host, but Jehovah would be their strength, their shield, a strong tower. The gods of their enemies were idols. Their God was from everlasting, the Creator of the world. His almighty arm would conquer their enemies, establish and maintain their supremacy among the the nations of the earth. The harder their fortune, the more galling the chains of their bondage, the more confident their assurance that Jehovah would put their enemies beneath their feet and establish his everlasting Kingdom in their midst.

The prophets dreamed of a time when Jehovah would pour out his spirit upon all flesh, and put his law within them and be a judge of the nations, making their officers Peace and their rulers Righteousness, and men would beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning-hooks, and nations would learn the art of war no more.

As misfortune after misfortune came upon the Jewish people, their faith became more confident and took a more definite form. When in bondage, they looked for deliverance. It very naturally came to be believed that they would be set free from foreign dominion through the instrumentality of a personal deliverer, a descendant of the royal family, a son of David, who was to be known as the Messiah. It is more than probable that this hope and faith were in their nature largely political. Indeed, in the mind of the Hebrew, ideas of religion and government were interfused and inseparable. Their religious faith was national rather than personal. It was the nation that was to be immortal rather than the individual.

It is quite certain that, in the thought of many, the Kingdom of God meant nothing more than the

political supremacy of the Jewish nation. It would appear that the prevailing hope and expectation among the contemporaries, and even among the followers, of Jesus, were patriotic rather than spiritual. Some of the disciples asked for the first places in the new order of things about to be established. After the crucifixion, their disappointment found utterance in the words, "We were hoping that it was he who was to redeem Israel." Men had appeared and announced themselves as the Messiah. They took the lead in rebellions against Gentile domination. They were doubtless patriots, but their misguided zeal was their country's enemy. In marked contrast with these political expectations, which were shared by his disciples, was the moral and spiritual faith of Jesus. His was a faith that concerned itself not so much with political rulers, laws and institutions, as with qualities of personal being.

It is to the poor in spirit, to those who mourn, to those who hunger after righteousness, to the meek and merciful, to the pure in heart, to the peacemakers, and to those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, to whom the Kingdom of Heaven is promised.

Jesus traced the evils of society, the limitations and defects of human life, to the heart of man; he essayed to remove those evils by changing that heart. He clearly saw one all-important truth—man must be changed. He repeated the earnest exhortations of John the Baptist, "Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand." Then, as now, there was no want of those whose faith was in externals, in political parties, in laws, and external changes. In his thought, the Kingdom of God was the supremacy of righteousness; wherever justice, goodness, love and purity were supreme, there was God's Kingdom already begun. He taught that it was difficult for a rich man to enter the Kingdom, not because he was rich, but because he would naturally love his possessions more than aught else. He tells the rich young man that if he will give his wealth to the poor, he will have treasures in heaven. He tells the scribe, who heartily assents to the ten commandments, that he is not far from the Kingdom.

In the thought of Jesus, the Kingdom of God is to come gradually and silently. The power that brings it operates from within, as does leaven. It comes as the tree comes from the seed. First the blade, then the ear, and then the full grain in the ear.

To Jesus the Kingdom of God, or Kingdom of Heaven, signified, among other things, the advent of peace, justice and righteousness, the relief of suffering, the liberation of the oppressed; in short, the supremacy of God's love for man, *in man*, in the human heart and in human life. Of course, this grand hope and faith were associated with much that was local and temporary. With this we need not, in this connection, concern ourselves.

Suffice it to remark that the glad tidings of the coming Kingdom fill the pages of the New Testament with joy and gladness.

The innocents may be slaughtered—John the Baptist beheaded—Jesus betrayed, scourged and crucified—Stephen stoned to death—Paul beaten, shipwrecked, imperiled again and again—John imprisoned; but, notwithstanding all this suffering, all these tragedies, the New Testament is radiant with the joy of glad tidings. And these tidings are to all. The message announcing the birth of the new order of things was named the Gospel, or good news. The person who was to inaugurate the Kingdom was named Immanuel, or God-with-us. The angels are represented as announcing his birth with a song of Peace on earth and Good-will to men. It is easy to question the literal correctness of the narrative. But it is quite certain that the GOOD-WILL TO MAN was in a human soul; and, further, that this good will was, is, and ever will be the motive power of human progress. It is this good will to man that will bring in the Kingdom of God.

The great characters of the New Testament—Jesus, Paul, John the Baptist and John the apostle—are not seeking their own salvation; they are not seeking God's Kingdom for themselves; they forget themselves in their glad service of others. Whatever their opinions may have been regarding the nature of that Kingdom or the time of its coming, there is no question but that the spirit, the motive, and somewhat of the power that brings the true Kingdom of God into the world was in their hearts and lives. In their loyalty, in their consecration and devotedness, they made their lives an expression of that Eternal Love that is ever promoting man's highest good.

It is more than probable that, in the thought of Jesus and his disciples, the Kingdom of God was to be established on this earth and in this life. One all-important element of truth in the early Christian conception of God's Kingdom had reference to the means by which it was to be brought into the world. There had been among the Jews, Persians, Greeks and Romans, no want of patriotism, valor and warlike enterprises. These nations had prospered by means of oppression. The strong made war upon the weak. Might made right. Each nation grew at the expense of other nations. The

old faith was in force. The faith of Jesus was in goodness, in righteousness, in that love that hastened to the relief of suffering; the strong men to help the weak; the rich men to share their wealth with the poor. The oppressed were to be set free; the sick were to be healed; injuries were to be forgiven; justice, peace and righteousness were to be established; God's will was to be done by men on earth, and his Kingdom was to come into the individual, and through him into society. The conception of God's Kingdom that has prevailed in the theologies of Christendom is very unlike that of Jesus.

Wherever the dogma of human depravity has obtained, God's Kingdom has been, as it were, projected into the life hereafter. Heaven was a place to go to. There was no possibility of God's will being done by depraved man. The depraved and alienated will of man could not be conformed to the divine will. Nothing was to be hoped from life on earth There could be no consistent faith in human progress. The word human inevitably came to mean something opposite to the word divine. There could be no saving aspiration or power in man. Humanity was lost. If any saving power came to man, it must come from afar; it must descend from on high; it could not be human or natural; it must be superhuman and supernatural. All this was consistent with the assumption that human nature was totally depraved and hopelessly alienated from God and goodness.

What is the growing faith of to-day regarding the Kingdom of God? The rational and liberal faith is based upon the assumption that man is the child of God; that man is a progressive being, capable of unlimited improvement, capable of knowing, choosing, loving, and doing God's will; that this life affords opportunity to be just, noble, generous, elevated, righteous; that man has not to wait for the Kingdom; that whenever and wherever God's will is done, then and there his Kingdom comes into the life of the one man, and through him into the world at large. No earnest soul will assign limits to the divine possibilities of human life and the no less divine susceptibilities of human nature. The significance of the faith that man is the son of God has not yet been fully appreciated. But we are beginning to believe that God's Kingdom is not a far-off place; neither is it limited to the other side of the grave. The Kingdom of God is the supremacy of his will; it is the progressive realization of his purpose; it is the supremacy of justice between man and man, the establishment of righteousness, the reign of virtue and holiness. It is not a ready-made condition into which man will enter; it will not descend from on high. It comes as the life of spring, the beauty of summer and the fruit of autumn come to the fields and to the husbandman. The activity that brings it is here on earth, among men. It is my ever-growing conviction that God's will will be done—that those divine laws that make for righteousness will be gladly obeyed, and the result, both in him who obeys and in society, may well be named the Kingdom of God.

This condition of things and of souls will not be attained suddenly or by some one act or person; it will be brought about slowly, sometimes silently, by those who make God's will their will, by all the doers of his will, by all who are led by the spirit of God.

No better name can be given to that motive, spirit and power that bring God's Kingdom into the world, than Immanuel, or God-with-us. That is, it is the divine *in man*, the love of righteousness and humanity that is in the HUMAN HEART, that flows out through HUMAN LIFE. It is this that leads mankind forward; it is this that reveals to man the divine possibilities of his own nature. One true son of God hints at the great fact that we may all be the children of God. Now, the will of God, the love of God for man, do not cease to be his will and love, do not cease to be divine, when they fill a human heart and shine forth through a human life. The will or purpose in Jesus to do God's will is a part of God's will; our love of justice and right, and of our fellow-men, is a part of the Eternal love. Now, it is that part of God's will, purpose and love that are in man that brings God's Kingdom into the world.

The love of man, of justice and righteousness, the desire to bless mankind, to establish justice and promote the cause of righteousness, is divine. May we not say that it is "very God"? may we not name it God-with-us?

In order to apprehend this great truth, we shall be obliged to divest ourselves of that mode of thought in which God is conceived of as an isolated being, who once, and only once, dwelt in a human soul and revealed himself through a human life. We need to come out from the prison of the old dogmas of human depravity, and catch a glimpse of the divine possibilities of human nature; then we shall discern that human and divine are not mutually exclusive terms, that in whomsoever God's will is supreme, there the divine and human touch each other, there in the one will are both God and man.

Is it anything less than this oneness of will that makes man the son of God? Can anything less than this bring the Kingdom of God into a single human soul and life—anything less than this bring his Kingdom into this world? That Kingdom has been and is now coming. It comes in the emancipation of the mind from debasing superstitions; it comes in the emancipation of men from human slavery, with the increase of knowledge; it is coming in that humane spirit, that man-serving love, never so active and efficient as it is to-day; it comes chiefly through human life. It comes *to* a Jesus, a Paul, a Luther, a Channing, a Garrison and a Parker, and through their teachings, but more through their lives, their loyalty, devotedness and self-forgetting consecration; it flows on, a blessing, a saving power to the world. One man catches sight of a truth, and by fidelity to it reveals it to mankind. To use the old expression, the word becomes flesh; or, to use an expression less liable to be misunderstood, the truth becomes life. The prophetic song of the angels, "Peace on earth, good will to men,"

is fulfilled by the deeds of men; the prayer of Jesus, "May thy Kingdom come," is answered by doing His will on earth.

In seeking the Kingdom and its righteousness, its justice, its virtue, its goodness and holiness, all other things needed to insure the peace and satisfaction of the soul, both here and hereafter, will be found.

Society, institutions and laws take shape and character from the soul of man. When the soul realizes its own divine possibilities, human life, whether here or elsewhere, becomes divine.

SERMON.

BY W. M. SALTER.

Delivered before the Wisconsin Conference of Unitarian and other independent societies, at Kenosha, Dec. 11, 1879.

"Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, for thou canst not make one hair white or black." Matt. v, 36.

I was reading, recently, an English writer who found difficulty in understanding these words. That we should not swear, was plain enough, and that we could not arbitrarily change the col r of our hair was equally plain. But the connection between the two was not obvious, and he would find something parallel, if a member of Parliament should urge that it was wrong to swear by the New Testament, because the person taking the oath could not make a single type, larger or smaller. (Amberley's Analysis of Religious Belief, p. 352, Am. Ed.)

But what is the real thought of Jesus? The Jews seem to have supposed that, though they might not swear by the name of God lightly, they might by inferior objects, as the heavens or the earth. God was a sacred name; these lower objects, as quite common and independent of Him, might be treated without such reverence. But to the mind of Jesus, they were, after all, connected in some way with God; the heavens were his throne, the earth was his footstool, Jerusalem was his city, and even a man's own head was not his own, for it was not in his power to make one hair white or black. This last seems simply a negative way of asserting the positive presence and power of God. And it is to this underlying thought of the passage that we wish to call attention. We cannot discuss the propriety of swearing. To the common oaths of the street any one of ordinary refinement will have an instinctive repugnance. But if we take the words of Jesus literally, it would seem as if every oath of whatever character was forbidden. We must no more administer the oath in courts of justice; the wronged man cannot appeal to heaven to adjudge his innocence; friends and lovers must give up their solemn vows and protestations. Yes, even those touching words of the litany, which have almost a sanctity to many a Christian heart, "by thy cross and passion," must be disallowed. A simple yea, yea, and nay, nay, is not indeed without a certain dignity, and doubtless most of us use much needless asseveration; our ordinary conversation is apt to contain more or less mild swearing, quite as objectionable, if we take Jesus' words literally, as any of the stronger forms. But, granting this, the question yet remains, whether, in some rare moments of our life the stress of feeling may not be so great as to make it hardly less than violence to nature and our purest and best instincts, to repress the solemn vow which rises to our lips.

But let us turn to the essential thought of the text. We love to separate and make distinctions. It is almost a necessity of our nature that we do so. We know this object as distinct from that. We love this person, and love being a singling out, a choosing, we do not love the other. We choose one course of action and reject another. The world thus becomes divided to us, made up of parts. This object and that, the beautiful and what is destitute of beauty, good and bad, these distinctions we make and fancy real and sure. But as we reflect, we are led to doubt whether the lines are really hard and fast. The tree stands there firm and beautiful, but in a short time it may become a shapeless mass of ashes. The soil seems quite another thing from the plant it nourishes. But what is nourishment? Is it not the soil giving of itself? The same elements that are in the earth enter into the plant and become cell and fibre, and take on form and beauty. Time and space are fertile sources of illusion. Now, there is common dirt, and now, and removed a little ways, there is leaf and blossom. And how much depends upon ourselves? our mood? When we are tangled and torn within, we see only confusion without. When we are calm and the heart swells for joy, we would not change one feature in the landscape. In disorder we see order, the misshapen tree is shapely, and not a gray or homely thing that does not go to make up the beauty of the whole. And do we not grow to love? do we not gain new eyes and see deeper meaning? A face that at one time has no grace that we should desire it, at another has a strange fascination for us. In youth we love joy and brightness; later, thoughtfulness and even sorrow acquire a beauty for us. And can we draw any firm line between the good and bad? Is not evil mixed with good, and what is bad in one relation, good in another? A certain course of action may have an attraction for me, but learning that it would be fraught with harm to another, it is no longer good to me. We make mistakes, we say; we slip and fall, and yet, if we have the cheerful temperament, if we will not fret and repine, I believe, in time, looking back upon our lives, we shall hardly wish one event or action other than it was; we shall doubt whether an occasional slip or fall was more than a harmless incident, or even diversion in our lives; and even where we have sinned, we shall not, in remembrance of it, allow ourselves to be disheartened, but say, rather, So much have I learned of the world and of myself, and with a deeper earnestness and a wiser hopefulness, dedicate ourselves anew to the true and the right.

What, then, are these distinctions that we make, as if they were so clear and abiding? Is not the truth equally that all things are changing, running into others, this object becoming that, the ugly becoming the beautiful, ill turning into good? Are the distinctions, though convenient and natural, after

all more than a human product, which the world, in its divine and never-ceasing movement refuses to allow, and with the vanishing of which we are left face to face with an Infinite unity?

But if we cannot separate the various parts of the world from one another, can we any more separate the world from God? Is not this, too, a distinction of human thought, convenient for some purposes, but hardly consonant with reality? We do, indeed, speak of the world as imperfect, and of God as perfect. But, if perfect, must not the work of God's hands be perfect, too? and is not any slight we cast upon it a kind of impiety toward Him? The world is dependent, we say, and God is independent; but does not its dependence link it vitally to Him? If it were separate from Him, would it be really dependent? Further, it is an effect, and He the cause. But causation, being a transferrence of force, what is at one moment in the cause, in the next passing to the effect, where can we draw the line, where God the cause ceases, and the world the effect, begins? Is not the world forever a divine embodiment, God himself taking form and showing us his might? Is not the sense of him

> "A sense
> Of something far more deeply interposed,
> Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
> And the round ocean and the living air,
> And the blue sky and the mind of man."

Let us consider various elements that go to make up the world. Can we separate the matter of the world from him? Matter is, according to a common view, the direct reverse of spirit. At one time it may have been created by God, but since then it has existed quite independently of Him. And yet a sort of practical atheism, or, at best, dualism, is involved in such a way of thinking. For what is all this world we see and hear and feel? The mountains that compel our worship, the sounds of stream and bird, that give us a sense of the joyousness of things, the air that fans our faces and gives life and freshness; what are these but variously complex modes of matter? Ah, if this world is not divine, then does God receive only half our worship; then does some of our warmest and most devout feeling go out to that which is not God. Then, practically, shall we have two divinities, one which we perhaps call to mind when absorbed in deep reflection, or when we read some ancient book; the other, ever before us, attending us by day and by night, speaking to us with power in the solemn forest, and from the kingly mountain-top, and looking upon us with mute tenderness in the constant stars. But such dualism is as unwelcome to the intellect as it is inconsistent with an undivided piety. For what can we say of matter? Is it actually that hard, unyielding, fixed thing that popular imagination makes it out to be? What are the wonderful metamorphoses that science tells us of? Now we have a solid body, now a liquid, and now an invisible gas. Water we can see; separate it into its elements, and we cannot see them. The flower withers, man walks the earth in strength and beauty, only in a few years to make sacred a sightless mass of ashes, or a little mound of earth. Something, doubtless, is constant in all changes, but it is not form, nor color, nor sound, nor taste; nor, I think, any quality that we commonly call material, and think so definite and self-subsisting. What is it? Science may call it force, philosophy may say real or absolute being, but religion cannot speak so coldly; and with bowed head and a passionate reverence, utters the sacred name of God. Let matter, then, change as it will, let it elaborate itself into life and beauty, let it become thinking, aspiring, achieving man, yet in all its height and complexity, as truly as in the simplicity and formlessness of common dust, it is nothing save as God dwells in it; and He is the source of its form and beauty, the power and essence of all thought and will.

But if not matter, are we not ourselves independent of God? Is not each soul a separate rounded whole, having its own thoughts and feelings, and in no way capable of being changed into anything else? But is this so? Do I not learn of you, do not your thoughts become my thoughts, does not your nobleness pass into me, and the ardor of your resolution become my own? What is real is permanent; but our thoughts, our feelings, our purposes, are for the most part as phenomenal as shadows flying over a landscape. We are not the same we were ten, twenty years ago, as not a particle of our bodies, so hardly a thought of our minds, that is not altered; and ten, twenty years to come, can we be as we are now? Yes, as there was a time when thought was not, there will again come a time when the busy brain will cease to think, and we shall go where is neither labor nor device nor wisdom nor knowledge. Is man, then, more than a phenomenon—for a little time coming into the light and life of the world, and then, by some inscrutable power, hurried back into the wilderness from whence he came? Ah, far from independent is he; born into the world he hardly knows how or why, encountering obstacles that he would never have made, incompetent to meet his desires, hurried along by passion that he cannot control, and hemmed in by circumstance which stands over against him like fate, and in the face of death impotent and uttering only the cry of a child, little of a god is he!

If, then, human life is so little a thing by itself; if, in its broad lines we can so plainly see the mastering hand of God, what single element that goes to make it up shall we allow to be altogether foreign to Him? Your thoughts are your own, yet are not the best ones sometimes those that you have least striven after, that come to you perhaps in a quiet. self-regardless hour, as if by impulse and inspiration? Your joy is your own, yet does it not come you hardly know how? Is it a thing you can create or can calculate upon beforehand? or do you not have most of it when you care least for it, when you give yourself in glad self-abandon to the beauty that fascinates you, to the duty that commands you; when only for love you love God, and know only that you are a joyous wave on the breast of that Infinite Deep?

And if not our joy, can we separate our sorrow from God? Sorrow is to many symbolized by shadows and darkness. Yes, it is sometimes heavier shadows and deeper darkness than any of an outward sort, for the sun may shine and the earth be lit up with light and radiance, and yet the gloom and desolation lie deep within. And do we not say of God that in him is light and no darkness at all? But if so, whence comes the darkness? We may call it simply the absence of light; but whence comes the absence? If God is all light and fills all all things, how is light absent anywhere? But there is darkness as well as light; there is sorrow as well as joy,—and, I think, a true piety will see God almost equally in both. We have first sorrow for others. Only a hard and worldly heart can refuse such sorrow: and do we not instinctively call it the height and divinity of man that he can unbend and forget himself in tender sympathy for others? What more pathetic or divine title can we give to him who walked Judean fields and succored the faint and stricken, eighteen centuries ago, than that of "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief"? And what quicker touchstone of Christian character have we to-day than whether that same spirit which was in him is in us also? Sorrow is an expression of the unity of things. You are one person and your friend is another—this is the language of ordinary thought. But let the face of your friend be touched with pain and grief, and are you not involuntarily suffused with the same? Where shall I draw the line where my personality ceases? I can lose a drop of blood or a bit of flesh and hardly miss it; but if my friend, the friend of my mind and heart, leaves me and goes I know not where, I am afflicted and desolate. Is my blood, then, more myself than he? If all men were not thus, in some mysterious sense, one, there could be no sympathy. You can have no thought and no suffering that I cannot, in some measure. understand and feel with. There is this blessed common heart by which we live, and each man, as he knows himself most deeply and has the widest range of feeling and passion, knows most truly and deeply all others. Not by wandering about, only eye and ear, but by living deeply, widely within ourselves, do we come to really know the world. And yet the end of our self-knowledge is to know the world, to realize the pettiness of the distinctions between man and man; yes, even to realize the commonness of our pain and suffering with that of creatures below man—to reach out to the world, as it were, and, as God does, bear it in our heart. But there is also sorrow for ourselves, there is pain, sickness—can we separate these from God? How easy it is for us to attribute these to natural law, and think we thereby escape the necessity of ascribing them to God! But if it is natural law, in this separate sense, then is there another deity aside from God. But is there any law or any nature, aside from Power or God? For by that name we do not mean an abstraction, but the very life and force of the world itself. Law is to us but a human statement of the Divine method; it is as various and as little in harmony with the Infinite Reality as human intelligence itself. We see only in part, and can speak only of what we see, and thou, O world, O God, art past all our seeing and dost surpass all our speech! Pain and sickness do indeed come in accordance with natural *law;* they are a part of *fate*, of the seemingly hard and ungracious *necessity*, which we would but cannot remove; but if we hesitate to say, in the same breath, God, then is our God not one with reality, but an idol of our imagination, an offspring of our self-regarding conceit. Oh, not to shape the world according to our thoughts and wants, but to bring our thoughts and wants into conformity with the world, is the impulse of true piety. I ask for myself no suspension of universal law. If I have cut my finger or in any way sinned against the laws of bodily health, I ask no exemption from pain, for that pain is essential to the integrity and harmony of the world's order. And why should I hesitate to speak of God as capable of inflicting pain? What reason have I to regard him as that easy, good-natured Being of whom a weak and effeminate imagination has conceived the idea? Nature gives us no such hints; she scruples not to kill and starve and do all sorts of graceless inhumanities; and man, in his strength and vigor, asks for no weak indulgence or partiality. If I am not fitted to live, if I do not know enough, am not careful enough, then let me yield my place, and let others, wiser, better, stronger, live on after me. Our own single lives are dear, but if we love the world, humanity and God, more than ourselves, there is something dearer, the manhood, the womanhood, valiant, wise and tender, that are yet to be. How ashamed must great Nature sometimes be of us, so petty, so selfish, so void of wonder and awe in her presence! What must God think of his children, so little like himself, so full of knowledge where knowledge is not, so boastful and reckless where, if wise, they would be suppliant, so self-willed where self-willed is only unrest and disappointment! *Fortiter amat:* God loves you, but he loves something better than you, that ideal which within your own breast you carry, and which, by pain and grief and disappointment of selfish aims, he would quicken you to see and give you strength to realize; therefore, he loves strongly. But if you fail, that ideal will no less live on in other souls, growing and deepening with the setting suns and with the thoughts and struggles of men, until out of the countless multitudes of human beings that have lived and fought, there survive a noble, royal race, a blessed company of faithful souls, whose faces shall shine with the light of God in heaven. But, if not our personal pain, can we separate our sin from God? Our sin, we say, alienates us from God, but does it banish God from us? Every act has its reward. A generous deed has often a happy train of consequences which surpasses all that you intended; persons sometimes bless you whom you had no thought of blessing, and others share in the good you have done, without knowing how or whence it came. You commit a sin and equally unintended results ensue. If you had known what unhappiness, what pain you were bringing to others, and what bitter reproaches would prey upon yourself, you would never have committed it.

Plainly, then, in your sin you are not your own master. God is in every act you do, whether for good or ill, meting out, with fatal exactness, the reward and penalty. You can no more escape Him than the stone thrown up in the air can escape the force of gravitation. The force is not without the stone, acting upon it, but within and a part of its very constitution. God exercises no external compulsion upon us; as he does not make us sin, so he does not constrain us to the right. I see no angry face near me when I am selfish; I can be so if I like, and I have my reward. But if I forget myself and cleave to what is fair and beautiful and right, I have a reward, too, and how different from the former! Now I seem lifted out of and above myself, breathing a new air and drinking in a heavenly light; before, it was still this old narrow self, its petty wishes, its contracted horizon, and I call to mind the words of an ancient poet—

> "Unless above himself he can erect himself,
> How poor a thing is man!"

The selfish life is simply the contracted life, though it has ease and luxury; it does not know the world—it does not know its own capabilities—it knows not love nor true sorrow—it is a stranger to noble pain and sweet penitence, and has its reward, sweet, perhaps, to itself, yet, after all, how poor and unlovely! Choose, then, your way, or, if you like, fail to choose—drift along in life without earnest thought or purpose. But, whatever you do or fail to do, you cannot escape the Secret Power "that infects the world" and moulds human destiny; you cannot bring high happiness out of listlessness and and self-pleasing; you cannot achieve any great thing save by some sacrifice and self-abandonment; you cannot win God and his surpassing love, save as you forsake all and yield to him.

What, then, can we separate from God? Jesus looked out upon the world and saw nothing profane, nothing by which we could lightly swear; the heavens are nothing independent of God; they are his royal abode; the earth is sacred, for it is his footstool; that fair product of human hands, Jerusalem, is yet his by Divine right; and even the hairs of man's head are changed and fashioned by his power alone. Of what, then, can I be disregardful? on what in heaven and earth can I look without a certain reverence? I love the world, for the world is the bright flowing garment of Deity; I own a certain kinship and loyalty to the humblest particle of dust, for the same Power which dwells in me dwells in it also; I bow in reverence before my unpremeditated, impassioned thought; I thank God for joy; I share in the Christian worship of sorrow; I am never so near God and the pure spirit of his Son as when I am nearest to man in sympathy and service; and even in my sin I discern the Providential hand, giving me with fatal precision my desert, or, if penitent, blessing me with forgiveness and granting me heavenly grace.

And if we can separate nothing from God, can anything separate God from us? Is not life best with an increasing, deepening consciousness of His presence in it? And death—is not the hand that takes us the same that has blessed us in life? And can we not trust it?

IV. JESUS IN THE EARLY PALESTINIAN CHURCH.

J. C. L.

Since outside of the accounts contained in the first part of the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, there are no allusions to the miraculous birth of Jesus to be found elsewhere in the New Testament; and since, as Froude, summing up the results of modern scholarship, says: "The four Gospels, in the form and under the names they bear, become visible only with distinctness toward the end of the second century of the Christian era,"—we turn to other sources to find where this idea became a part of organic Christianity.

The immediate successors of the Apostles were called the Apostolic fathers. The first writer among these was Clement of Rome. He is, like Paul, the author of two epistles in Greek, addressed to the Corinthian Church. They were written toward the close of the first century. Their object was to instruct the Corinthians in the "life, words and promises" of Jesus, and to enjoin the Christian duties. The longer one was held in such esteem that it was afterward publicly read in many of the churches, even down as late as the fourth or fifth century, according to Jerome. But Clement seems to be ignorant of any supernatural birth of Jesus. He never hints of it. Then comes Polycarp, who has left us a letter to the Philippians. He died a martyr, very aged, about the year 150. Tradition says he was personally acquainted with more or less of the twelve—"had conversed with those who had seen the Lord." But he seems to know nothing of any thing peculiar in the birth of Jesus. A certain Barnabas, whom some suppose to have been the companion of Paul, wrote a general epistle. It undoubtedly recognizes the pre-existence of Jesus, but makes no reference to an exceptional birth.

Next is the Shepherd of Hermas. Late writers like Origen and Eusebius and Athanasius quote this author as of great importance. His writings were much read in the churches for several centuries. They refer to the leading events of the life and death and resurrection of Jesus; but there is not a trace of the miraculous conception.

Then there follow Hegiseppus of Rome, Athenagoras of Alexandria, Theophilus of Antioch, and Tatean of Assyria, in whose fragmentary remains we look in vain for any recognition of this supreme event. But when, toward the close of the second century, we come to the name of Justin Martyr, we find the first reference to the legends of the nativity, as they are found in the Gospels. He is the first writer who describes Jesus as not born of human parents. But there is little doubt that Justin was of Gentile race; his education had been in the philosophy of Zeno, Aristotle and Pythagoras. He had been deeply imbued with Platonic and Pagan notions. Not finding satisfaction, however, in these speculations, he turned to the Hebrew proph-

ets and to Christianity. But we find in his writings a constant commingling of Gospel truth and Greek philosophy. Neander calls him an "itinerant preacher in the garb of a philosopher."

Here, then, nearly two centuries after the birth of Jesus, we come across the first authentic allusion to the supernatural character of that event. And yet, with Justin, it has no such significance as with later writers; for he admits that there was a difference of opinion on this point, and in a list of heretics, he did not include the important sect of the Ebionite Christians, who are distinguished for maintaining all through the early centuries of the Church that Jesus was born as all other children are born—was the son of human parents. Moreover, in arguing for the credibility of the miraculous conception, he says, "We propound nothing different from what you believe regarding those whom you esteem sons of Jupiter,"—such as Mercury, Æsculapius, Bacchus and Hercules. And referring to the deification of the Roman Emperors which his own day witnessed, he adds, "We have learned that those only are deified who have lived near to God in holiness and virtue." The tyrant Caligula had been assassinated on account of his mad attempt to be worshipped as a divinity.

I have mentioned a class of Christians known as Ebionites. It is difficult to distinguish them from the Nazarenes and Essene Christians of ecclesiastical history; but all were Jewish Christians. They belonged to the nation and land of Jesus. They were the legitimate successors of the Twelve at Jerusalem. And they lived in and about that city until their first Bishop (who was none other than James, the brother of Jesus), was killed; and to escape the ravages of war and persecution, they took refuge in Pella of Decapolis, on the east side of the river Jordan. Most of them soon returned to re-establish themselves amid the ruins of Jerusalem. But as late as the fifth century, a church of the Ebionites still existed at Pella. Now, what was the characteristic belief of these Primitive Christians? Says Mosheim, "Although they held our Savior Jesus Christ in great veneration as a divine legate or prophet, they would not admit that any miraculous circumstances attended his birth, but maintained that he was the natural son of Joseph, begotten according to that law by which all other mortals are produced." They maintained that Jesus, though designed by God to fulfill the Messianic hope of the Jewish people, as a child lived a natural human life. It was only at his baptism that his full office and power were openly conferred upon him by the descent of the Holy Ghost. Then, according to their views, many strange appearances took place. A bright light illuminated the region round about; flames played upon the waters of the Jordan.

Consider the circumstances of these early disciples, who, a little later, are known as "the Poor," or Ebionites. The first fifteen bishops of the Jerusalem Church were all Jews. The man to whom they owed most was James, the brother of the crucified. He was of greater importance than Peter in that first church. James, says Neander, "stood in closest family relation to the Redeemer, and from the first was present with him during the whole of his earthly development." Yet those to whom he must have told over and over again all that he knew of the life of Jesus, are those to whom the idea of his supernatural birth is strange, and they reject the story to the last. After the murder of James the Church is reorganized, and they again select a relative of Jesus to be its head. It is Simeon, the cousin of Jesus. Afterward the grandchildren of one of the brothers of Jesus are found acting as officers in the Jewish Christian Churches. But in none of these, though founded within the very circle of Palestinian traditions, amid the very scenes of the Master's life; though officered and instructed by the relatives of Jesus himself—in none of these does the miraculous infancy of the Messiah have any admission or importance. It would seem to be no part of any gospel which they knew.

There was no lack of loyalty to Jesus. Adam, Enoch, Abraham and Moses were great: Jesus was greater, because he had in greater measure the spirit of God. They were ready to die for the new faith, but to worship the Teacher of Nazareth was far enough from their thoughts. He had forbidden it, pointing upward to One higher, whom he worshipped. It was by the influence of Gentile Christians, of men educated in Pagan idolatry, of men versed in subtle philosophies, that the infancy of Jesus was at length written in the language of Mythology. It took Greece, Alexandria, Rome—people remote from the simple life of Judea and Galilee—people of a widely different type of thought, to create the Supreme God—head of Jesus. The original Palestinian Christians were left far behind. As Gieseler says, "They did not keep pace with the progressive development in the Catholic Church." Jerusalem finally lost all power in ecclesiastical affairs. "The Jewish converts—or, as they were afterward called, the Nazarenes—who had laid the foundation of the Church, soon found themselves overwhelmed with the increasing multitudes that, from all the various religions of Polytheism, enlisted under the banner of Christ."

"The Art of Questioning." That it is an art every teacher knows. It is not every teacher who can even question knowledge *out* of a child's mind successfully; but to question knowledge *into* a child's mind successfully, that shows the "born teacher." But why not try for the second birth, if one has missed the first? The little pamphlet called "The Art of Questioning," is a teacher's talk to teachers, and gives some admirable advice. Are you having a dull time with your class in day school or in Sunday school? send for the pamphlet to *Unity* office. We keep it in stock as a Sunday school tool. And as every mother is *ex officio* a teacher, it is a word to mothers, too. Price of the pamphlet mailed, 15 cents. W. C. G.

The papers by Dr. Julia Holmes Smith and Mrs. M. E. Bagg, in our last two issues, were read before the recent Woman's Congress, at Madison, Wis. In the latter paper the words, Runes of Freedom,

near the bottom, first column, p. 294, should read, Runes of Freedom, of healing and of power shalt thou know, etc.

WISCONSIN CONFERENCE.

The Annual Meeting of the Wisconsin Conference opened at Kenosha, Dec. 9th, with a sermon from Rev. Brooke Herford of Chicago on "The Faith that Underlies the Different Creeds." The drift of the discourse was to show the substantial Unity that exists beneath the various diversities of belief, and the awakening of men to the fact. On Wednesday morning the session opened with devotional exercises, led by Rev. R. L. Herbert of Geneva, Ill. His subjects were the relation of ideals of life to conduct, the influence of each, and the paramount importance of loyalty to recognized duty.

The Conference then organized with the choice of R. L. Herbert as president. Reports were heard from the secretary and societies. The secretary dwelt upon the need of more general missionary work in the State, and the want of means for its prosecution. There is no difficulty in getting good audiences, but the pecuniary risk, both of traveling and engaging places of meeting, and reliance on contributions or collections solely to meet the outlay, can hardly be assumed by one person. Rev. Olympia Brown, of Racine, followed with a discourse on "The triumphant and all-embracing Love of God," refuting the superstition of a spirit of evil dividing the sway of the world with Deity.

In the afternoon T. B. Forbush gave a paper on "Crime and Education," taking the ground that sound physical development and mental culture afford the most efficient means of preventing crime. Any brief synopsis would not do the effort justice. The paper was heard with close attention, and with a general assent to its importance. The secretary of the Conference then read a paper on "Some of the Difficulties, Dangers and Duties attending the Liberal work." Among difficulties was not merely prejudice, but mental inertia, pseudo-liberalism in nominally orthodox pulpits, confusing people's minds and diverting them from fundamental questions; and want of money with which to explore and work up new fields. As to dangers were mentioned, misapprehension and misappropriation of our principles, in respect to freedom and individuality; the abuse of our fellowship by hobbyists; the possible growth of an imperious intellectualism to the neglect of religious culture, and excess of reactionary change. Among duties were named the pronunciation of radical truths; dealing as much as practicable in positive affirmations; the nurture of the religious element; a missionary spirit, that seeks the propagation of the truth, and looks to the teaching of the young.

In the evening R. L. Herbert gave us one of his eminently practical sermons, which was received with lively interest and satisfaction. Subject: "What should we emphasize chiefly in religion?"

Thursday morning, devotional exercises were led by J. Ll. Jones, and a general Conference ensued, participated in by Bros. Gordon, Herbert, Salter, Wright, Jones and Simmons. The subject presented and discussed was "How to reconcile the zeal of the reformer with the trust of the quietist."

The Conference then listened to a sermon from G. E. Gordon, of Milwaukee. Subject: "Phrases and Symbols,"—their interpretation.

The old phrases and symbols are the old stock terms of Evangelical religion, and we need not try so much to criticise or deny as to put them into their historical place, and charitably interpret their spiritual meaning.

The phrases helpfulness, evolution, progress, &c., we need to see that we fully understand and practically apply.

The end of all faith should be a noble life. No adequate report of the lively discussion following this, or other essays, can be given.

An invitation received from the Illinois Fraternity of Liberal Religious Societies to join with them in a Spring Conference, at Rockford, Ill, was accepted, and the Executive Committee of the Conference directed to make arrangements therefor.

W. M. Salter, of Burlington, Ia., preached the discourse, to which the readers of *Unity* are treated in full, in this number. In the afternoon the following resolutions were offered and adopted in reference to a communication from the Committee on Fellowship of the National Conference.

Whereas, This Conference is a Conference of Unitarian and Independent Societies, and

Whereas, The choice of ministers by congregations should be a matter of their own; and

Whereas, Any supervision would remove from their congregations the necessity of strict previous investigations into the fitness of candidates; therefore,

Resolved, That the Wisconsin Conference of Unitarian and Independent Societies deems such action as is proposed in the resolutions, sent to them by said Committee, as unwise and unnecessary.

The Conference then heard an essay from J. Ll. Jones. Subject—"Principles and not Persons, the True Basis of Religion."

The imperishableness of principles—and the impersonality of truth—are facts that all ought to recognize and cherish, irrespective of what may become of theories respecting the personality of any being whatever.

Next came the essay of Bro. Simmons, on "Goldwin Smith's Moral Interregnum," in which he controverted the position that morality depends necessarily on Christianity, which Goldwin Smith seems to claim; that heathen life and conduct testify against that position.

The essay could not be reported adequately without giving it in full. Frequent marks of approbation, as well as general applause, at its close, showed the emphatic impression it had made.

Some remarks were made by G. E. Gordon, sustaining the points of the essay, as to the activity of the moral element, rather than the religious element, and against prison abuse and cruelty.

Remarks were also made by Col. Howe, who hoped the essay would be published, and also desired to have it understood that allusions to the Christian religion, referred to the perverted form it has received from theological teachings rather than to the pure and primal teachings of Jesus.

The Committee on officers for the ensuing year reported the following nominations:—

President—James H. Howe, of Kenosha.

Vice-Presidents—Rev. A. A. Roberts, of Baraboo; Dr. J C. Luke, of Racine.

Secretary—W. C. Wright, Madison, Wis.

Treasurer—G. E. Gordon, of Milwaukee.

In the evening Rev. J. H. Crooker preached on "Our Word and Work.

To understand Unitarianism we must make a broad distinction between theology and religion. Unitarianism is no

speculation but life. It is universal religion—religion first and theology subordinate. It involves ethical culture.

It indeed shows the unreality of many old ideas, but endeavors to give something better and truer in their place.

Unitarianism seeks to furnish men with a genuine conscience as the motive power of right conduct.

After sermon, Bro. Jones expressed the thanks of the Conference to the Kenosha Society for their kind entertainment.

The delegates and attendants at the Conference were invited to a social reunion, after service, at the residence of Z G. Simmons, Esq., whose generosity and hospitality so well entitle him to the name of "Liberal" in its full acceptation. Time forbids enlargement on the courteous reception and our social enjoyment at the reunion, but I think we all parted and went our way, feeling that it was good that we had been to Kenosha, and not only enjoyed a lively Conference, but the society of so kind and affable a people as we found there.

WM. C. WRIGHT,
Secretary.

December 11, 1879.

NOTES FROM THE FIELD.

J. LL. J.

"What news abroad i' the world?"

PHILADELPHIA, PA.—The second Annual Peace Fair, under the presidency of Lucretia Mott, was held at Spring Garden Nov. 26–28. The proceeds went to aid in the publication of *The Voice of Peace*, a monthly periodical, $1.00 a year.

ST. PAUL, MINN.—W. C. Gannett has published a Christmas service for home use, with carols and responsive readings. A few extra copies have been struck off, and can be furnished at $2.50 per hundred. All orders must be for this amount, or more. Most of the music is from the "Sunny Side," and the whole service quite available and very beautiful.

IOWA CITY, IOWA.—A course of Sunday evening lectures is in progress at the Liberal church in this place, in which President Pickard and three Professors of the State University take part, as well as Mr. Hunting, Hon. J. P. Irish and the pastor, Mr. Clute. Such subjects as Science and Religion, Nature in the Bible, The Devil in Literature, The Antiquities of Earth and Man, Taxation of Churches, etc., are to be considered. An Unity and an Examiner Club are in operation.

HARTFORD, CONN.—Rev. Mr. Kimball is delivering a course of Sunday evening lectures on the Views of Unitarians. In a recent one on the Idea of God, he says: "Among all the doubts and questions of our time, all the startling discoveries of science upsetting so much else in the old theologies, all the new and wonderfal light which the Evolution philosophy is throwing on the processes of the world's growth and on the power which underlies them, while taking them all in, we can still say as Paul did of old, say it with a wider vision and as severe a truth, say it as the best representation of our faith to-day, 'To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things and we in Him.'"

PERSONALS.—Robert Collyer preached to his old flock Dec. 7th. There was an overflowing house, and preacher and people were radiant, and on Tuesday, Dec. 9, he joined in happy wedlock Samuel, his eldest son, to Miss Louise Dewey. Unity with many friends extend congratulation.

W. M. Salter, who for two years or more, has "ranched it" in Colorado, that thereby he might re-establish his health, is once more in the ministerial field, ready to preach. The discourse printed in this paper, although not prepared for the Kenosha Conference, was none the less welcome. His present address is 523 Columbus Ave., Boston.

MANCHESTER, N. H.—Among the new liberal religious papers is *The Rising Faith*, a monthly edited by Henry Powers, and published at this place. In the first number just received, Mr. Powers says:

"The rising faith is hospitable to all truth, new as well as old. It welcomes knowledge from every quarter, and where it knows most it loves and trusts yet more. It rises from what it knows, in adoring aspiration, toward what is still unknown, and expects to make its new discoveries in the same way in which all discoveries have been made in the past—by doing the will of God, or by obeying the laws of the universe. Hence, ignorance and superstition are not elements of this faith, but hindrances to its exercise. Its basis is the consensus of facts in the line and course of all accepted knowledge; its method is that of science, if this much-abused word is understood to include what is known of spirit as well as of matter; and its hope is to enlarge the scope of human life, to make it constantly wider, and deeper and better.

EVANSVILLE, IND.—Rev. Geo. Chainey is one of the few pillars of Unity in the West who is permitted to live in a parsonage, and a new one at that, just completed, a cosy nest under the shadow of the church, which is being filled every Sunday evening with an audience, who attend a course of Shakspearean lectures delivered by the pastor. A recent number of the *New Covenant* contains a flattering notice of Mr. Chainey's volume, "Foundation Stones of the Church of the Unity." It says, "Mr. Chainey is a young man who came to the Unitarians from the Methodist church, some three or four years since. His sermons are fine specimens of the Unitarian pulpit. Their diction is fervid and beautiful. His style is well calculated to secure popular favor, and he is building up a strong congregation in Evansville."

OAKLAND, CAL.—*Work and Play* is an eight-page paper, "published every Sunday for the good it may do," by a committee of ladies belonging to the Independent church, of which Rev. L. Hamilton is pastor. It contains a discourse by the pastor, a notice of a lecture by Dr. McKaig on Man, in which he says: "Our conceptions of God are made of all that is best, purest and sweetest in human nature. * * The God of the savage is only a bigger savage. * * To one the church is a Pullman car, into which one gets with a through ticket to heaven, and with an ample lunch basket of sound doctrines, goes to sleep, and gives himself no concern about the way. While to another the church is a hospital, with her ambulance wagons out upon the world's battle-field, bringing in the sick and the wounded." From this paper we also learn that our friend, Rev. N. E. Boyd, who has served in the Liberal ministry in New York and New England, is connected with the press in San Francisco and lecturing betimes on the "Ethics of Money-Getting" and kindred subjects.

BOSTON AND CAMBRIDGE.—The "Annex," at Cambridge, is the popular and sarcastic name given to the opportunity for collegiate instruction for women at Harvard. The "Annex" is neither a department of nor membership in the College, but the "local habitation and name" of a project by which girls can either obtain systematic education or choose electives, having the result of their work tested by thorough examination. The admission examinations this year were almost duplicates of the College examinations for young men. Twenty-five have entered this "Annex," four of whom have taken the regular four years' College course. Those who studied Latin, Greek, or Mathe-

matics, were required to pass the regular entrance examination for these special departments, while those taking other studies passed such private examinations as were required. Nine entered for one course only; the rest took about three courses each. It is expected that the number of applicants will yearly increase. The conservative element in educational circles declares that Harvard is nobly discharging its duty to women, in opposition to the progressive element, which demands equal opportunities of privilege, place, membership and degree, in academic honors.

To satisfy the increasing desire for a thorough test of scholarship, and to create a higher standard of education, were instituted a few years ago in Boston the "Harvard Examinations of Women," which we now also hold in Cincinnati and Philadelphia. About thirty candidates presented themselves last year, who each obtained her instruction in her own way; the examiner, who is sent by Harvard, ranking each scholar on the preliminary or advanced examinations, and giving certificates according to the proficiency exhibited. Until the Annex was established, these examinations were of great actual value to teachers in obtaining future situations, or as satisfaction to the mind of a student who wished to measure her actual knowledge; and, though partially superseded by the later arrangement, they still are valuable to all those who are obliged to obtain their instruction in a circuitous manner and at odd times. Only a few can go to Harvard and study there for one or more years, while many can go to some center for a three days' examination, and gladly receive a certificate, which is of almost identical value with a degree, the basis on which both are given being nearly equal.

The "Society to Encourage Studies at Home," embraces 100 teachers and over 1,000 pupils, from all parts of the United States, Canada and Japan. Its purpose is to induce young women to form the habit of devoting some part of every day to the study of a systematic and thorough kind; and is especially intended for those who are too busy in other ways to pursue a college course, or who are not able to engage paid instructors. Courses of reading and plans of work are arranged, from which one or more may be selected. The instruction is given and answers are received through correspondence and books, sent and returned through the mail.

The "Teacher's School of Science," for many years wholly maintained by Mr. John Cummings, this last winter attained extraordinary size and importance. The study of nature having been definitely introduced into the public schools, it was deemed essential to institute appropriate courses upon Elementary Botany, Geology and Mineralogy. Contributions from Boston ladies generously followed, 600 applicants, almost wholly teachers, were entered, and Professors Goodall, Hyatt and Burbank gave six lectures each on Saturday afternoons, to eager school-masters and mistresses. Every one in the audience was furnished with a shallow tin dish containing the specimens which furnished the subject of the day's talk, and with instruments for dissecting a flower or a lobster. And when the 600, each holding a lobster in his or her hand, simultaneously stripped the shell from its back, the noise resounded like the crack of doom, followed by a peal of laughter. The hour lengthened into twice sixty minutes, as group after group gathered round the Professor's table for further and more private instruction, when the larger part of the audience had gone. Six hundred identical specimens were hard to provide; 600 flowers, all budded or blown to the same extent; or 600 snails were hard to find, but crabs and sponges and stones were easier. The school was unique and delightful; and if not so expensive (about $3,000) would be continued every winter, through individual enterprise.

This October, some sixty mothers who were not teachers, have been studying Botany with Professor Goodall, combining laboratory practice with listening, that in the vacation months they might teach their own children in their beautiful summer homes.

Surely, facilities for instruction exist for women, but a large amount of time, commensurate with this increasing knowledge, has not yet been invented. K. G. W.

ST. LOUIS, MO.—The revival of business this fall excited the hope, among all the charities and debt-burdened churches, that now large sums of money could again be realized from all manner of bazars, fairs, dinners, theatricals and the like. A multitude of them were set on foot and advertised. But patrons, so far, are few and not flush, and the proceeds have been provokingly small. Besides, the hard times have made men sharp; they will not stand the patient fleecing which once caused no complaint.

Some of the churches have already lost their financial feet. The High Street Presbyterian went under the auctioneer's hammer a few weeks ago. The new Westminster is on the brink. The elegant Central (Presbyterian), which Mr. Snyder's society proposed to buy last summer, has crushed its own society, and must go to somebody soon. St. John's, Episcopal, is mortgaged for more than it is worth. An active member said, a few days since, it could not be saved. The beautiful Trinity, too, has been dwindling away, and not long since discussed the proposition to merge itself in Christ Church, which is far from well off in its treasury.

Rev. Mr. Holland, of St. George's (the only Episcopal church in the city out of debt), goes to Chicago. It will be a long time before his place can be filled. A man of great ability, varied scholarship and breadth of thought, earnest, liberal and brave. He excited no little opposition by the scope of his preaching. Some persons, wishing that the church in Chicago should fully understand the views of the man they were calling, sent to the vestry-men and others any heretical sayings of his they could find (and they were many), and, among others, the sermon on Eternal Punishment, in which that dogma was so dreadfully used up that the Universalists published it as a tract. "Are these your sentiments?" said the leading vestry-men, as he appeared with a handful of the self-accusing documents. Rev. Mr. H.—"They are." V.—"Have you not modified your views somewhat since they were uttered?" H.—"I have not." V.—"But do you consider them *cardinal?*" H.—"So cardinal that, if the contrary is Christianity, then I am no Christian." The vestry-men looked at each other with some apparent surprise. At length, one said he did n't believe much in the old doctrine any way. Another said he always *thought* he did, *until he read that sermon!* The third said he did n't care about hearing it preached, and it need n't interfere with the call to Chicago!

Of our own churches there 's not much to say. Whatever happens, the Church of the Messiah will not be in debt. It is going on with the new edifice, and the handsome and commodious Mission House (costing about $25,000) will be a good symbol of its charities. The Church of the Unity holds its own, though it has a debt. We hope something will be done, before the summer comes, to clear it off. The Moody and Sankey organization here is very complete, but the period of epidemic mania has not yet been reached. J. C. L.

"SCRIPTURES, OLD AND NEW!"

COMPILED BY F. L. H.

IMMORTALITY.

I.

But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them who are asleep, that ye sorrow not as those who have no hope. (I Thes. iv.) For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle be destroyed, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens (II Cor. v.) And as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. For this corruption must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruption shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then will be brought to pass that which is written: 'Death is swallowed up in victory.' (I Cor. xv.) For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is renewed day by day; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are but for a time; but the things which are not seen are everlasting (II Cor. iv.) Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are right, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, whatever virtue there is and whatever praise, think on these things. (Phil. iv.) —*Paul.*

And I saw a great white throne and him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne; and books were opened, and the dead were judged out of the things written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and the underworld gave up their dead; and they were judged each one according to his works.

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold I make all things new. He that overcometh shall inherit these things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

And God will wipe away every tear, and death shall be no more, neither shall mourning nor crying be any more; and there shall be no more pain. And there will be no night there; and they need not light of lamp and light of sun; for the Lord God will give them light, and they shall reign forever and ever. —*New Testament.* (*Revelation.*)

Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God! Beloved, now are we children of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be. But we know that, when it shall be made to appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every one that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure. —*New Testament.* (*I. John* 3.)

In this present life, I reckon that we make the nearest approach to knowledge when we have the least possible concern or interest in the body, and are not saturated with the bodily nature, but remain pure until the hour when God himself is pleased to release us. And then the foolishness of the body will be cleared away and we shall be pure and hold converse with other pure souls, and know of ourselves the clear light everywhere; and this is surely the light of truth. These are the sort of words, Simmias, which the true lovers of wisdom cannot help saying to one another, and thinking.

If this is true, O my friend, there is great hope that, going whither I go, I shall there be satisfied with that which has been the chief concern of you and me in our past lives. And now that the hour of departure is appointed to me, this is the hope with which I depart, and not I only, but every man who believes that he has his mind purified.

[After giving at some length a description of the other world and its judgments according to the character and inward condition of the departing soul, Socrates is represented as saying]

I do not mean to affirm that the description which I have given of the soul and her mansions is exactly true—a man of sense ought hardly to say that. But I do say that, inasmuch as the soul is shown to be immortal, he may venture to think, not improperly or unworthily, that something of the kind is true. The venture is a glorious one, and he ought to comfort himself with words like these. Wherefore, I say, let a man be of good cheer about his soul, who has cast away the pleasures and ornaments of the body as alien to him, and rather hurtful in their effects, and has followed after the pleasures of knowledge in this life; who has adorned the soul in her own proper jewels, which are temperance, and justice, and courage, and nobility, and truth—in these arrayed she is ready to go on her journey when her time comes.

Plato, 429—346 *B. C.* (*reported Conversation of Socrates, "Phaedo,"* 114)

If any such thing take place as seems fore-shadowed by the Deity, let us make ready to depart from this life joyful and thankful, considering ourselves as released from prison and freed from our fetters, in order that either we may go back to the eternal home to which in truth we belong, or else be freed from all feeling and annoy. But if nothing shall be fore-shown us, yet let us be thus minded, to regard that day, so full of dread to others, as auspicious to ourselves; and let us never consider as an evil, that which hath been appointed either by the immortal gods, or by nature, the parent of all. For not without forethought nor by chance have we been begotten and created, but in truth there has been a certain Power that considered mankind; nor did it create and nourish us, that, when all our labors are past, we should then fall upon death as an evil without end: let us look upon it rather as the haven and refuge prepared for us. O that we might be borne thither with outspread sails! But if we are to be buffeted by adverse winds, yet a little later we shall be brought of necessity to the same place. But can that which is necessary for all, be to any an evil?

—*Cicero*, 106—43 *B. C.* (*Tusc. Disp. I.* 49.)

Where there is eternal light, in the world where the sun is placed, in that immortal imperishable world place me, O Soma!

Where king Vaivasvata reigns, where the secret place of heaven is, where these mighty waters are, there make me immortal!

Where life is free, in the third heaven of heavens, where the worlds are radiant, there make me immortal!

Where wishes and desires are, where the bowl of the bright Soma is, where there is food and rejoicing, there make me immortal!

Where there is happiness and delight, where joy and gladness are, where the desires of our desire are attained, there make me immortal.

Rig Veda, 1500 *B. C.* (*v. Max Mueller's "Chips," I, p.* 46.)

"UNITY" SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS.—SERIES IV.

THE GROWTH OF THE HEBREW RELIGION.

BY W. C. GANNETT.

Lesson 9.

THE CREED OF THE PROPHETS.

The **Oldest Books** preserved in the Old Testament are books of poetic discourses written by some of the eighth century Prophets. You can help yourself remember which they are by the catch-word AHZIM, made up of their initials,—**Amos, Hosea, Zechariah** (but only ix.-xi.,) **Isaiah** (but only some twenty-seven chapters in the first half of the book,) and **Micah.**[17] About the same time the national history began to be compiled out of older materials[18] already on record or floating on the people's lips,—the old legends, traditions, annals, laws and songs. The legend-making age was coming to an end, and a literary age beginning; and it was our Prophets, again, who were the historians. They were the earliest literary class as well as the earliest preachers.

The Prophets' Creed, as gathered from these writings, shows how the religion had "grown"[19] since King David's time in spite of all the popular idolatry. It might be summed up thus:—

(1) We believe in One Only God, the Living[20] God, Lord of Nature and of Nations, Jehovah of the hosts of heaven, the Creator, the Eternal. (Their belief is almost pure monotheism. They play on the old god-name: Jehovah is "El," the *Might*,—those other so-called gods are "Elilim," the *mites!*)

(2) We believe that Jehovah is a righteous[21] God, exacting righteousness by the fiery terrors of his anger.

(3) We believe that the great Jehovah is the "Holy One of *Israel*," that she is his "holy and peculiar people," his "flock," his "sons," his loved but faithless "bride"; that for the faithlessness her desolation is assured, but that the desolation is no surer than her final glorious restoration under a prince of great King David's line.

(4) We believe that the offerings he wants from us are not bulls and sheep and yearling calves upon his altars, but mercy, justice, hands clean from evil, hearts humble towards himself. Strong drink, luxury, the judge's bribe, the merchant's cheat, the money-hunter's grip upon the widow and the poor,—the Prophets cry against these things like any modern preacher; while the stranger, the fatherless, the slave, even the dumb animal, they tenderly remember.—How near all this seems to the Sermon on the Mount! The love of God and love of man already beginning to be taught as one!

Read "Israel Desolated and Restored," Amos iv. 13; v. 8, 9; ix. (Compare Matt. xxiv.)
"The True Sacrifice," Is. i. 10-17; Mic. vi. 6-8. (Compare Matt. xii. 1-13.)
"Woe unto them!" Is. v. 8-30. (Compare Matt. xxiii.)

17. Micah: For Amos, see B. f. L. ii. 209-215. Hosea, 221-228. Zechariah, 238-239. Isaiah, 248-263, 283-297. Micah, 275-278.——**18. Older Materials:** Records, such as the lost "Book of Jasher," i. e. the "Upright," (Josh. x. 13,) and that called "Wars of Jehovah," (Num. xxi. 14;) laws, such as the earliest Hebrew law-book, the "Book of the Covenant," (Ex. xxi-xxiii. 19; xxiv. 7;) legends, like the stories of the Patriarchs and Moses; and songs, of which possibly 2 Sam. i. 17-27, and Jud. v. and Gen. xlix. are instances. Much of this old material is imbedded in our present Bible-histories; but the histories did not get their present shape until the time of the Captivity or later.——**19. Grown since:** See B. f. L ii. 196-199, 244-247.——**20. Living:** We say "*it* rains, it thunders,"—the Hebrew said "*He* rains, He thunders:" and so of all things. We think of law, he thought of Will; we of forces, he of the Arm or the Word of Jehovah. Nature and history were to him a vast drama, and Jehovah the one actor in it. This was the Hebrew's conception of the Universe, his "science," not mere poetry to him. And yet was his "One God" so great or grand as our thought "God is One?" To him it was "God *over* all;" to us it is "God *in* all." See Mueller's essay on "Semitic Monotheism," in vol. i. of his "Chips."——**21. Righteous:** Read chapters i. and ii. of Matt. Arnold's "Literature and Dogma."

Lesson 10.

OLD TESTAMENT HEIGHTS.

But the **Noblest Books** of the Old Testament—save Job,[22] perhaps, and certain Psalms,—were written shortly before, or during, the years of sorrow in Babylon (586-538 B. C.,)—the books called **Deuteronomy,**[23] **Jeremiah, Ezekiel,** and **Isaiah** (its latter half.) The first was probably the work of a prophet-priest about 620 B. C., but ascribed to Moses to promote Josiah's Reformation. Of the the other three, the first was written by the Prophet of the gathering gloom of the Captivity, the second by the Prophet of its midnight, the third by the Prophet of the radiant dawn of hope in which it closed.[24]

If we would stand upon the very **Summits**[25] **of the Old Testament,** we must read the glowing poems of this second Isaiah. Who he was, we know not, but he is the Jesus of the Older Testament. He sees two Israels,[26] one faithless and one faithful, the latter bearing the bruise of the other's sins. He foresees a glorious new Jerusalem, a kingdom of joy and peace because a kingdom of righteousness. He even foresees little, captive, down-trodden Israel becoming a Light to the other nations of the world and gathering them all to the feet of her own righteous and gracious God. And he calls that God, "the Lofty One who inhabiteth Eternity, whose name is Holy,—who dwelleth also with him who is of a contrite and humble spirit;" he is Israel's "Savior," her "Redeemer," her "Father:" "A mother may forget her child, yet will not I forget thee," saith Jehovah.

Bright foregleams these, again, of Jesus' gospel of repentance and the kingdom of heaven at hand; and of his thought about "our Father," and the death upon the cross.

Read "The Servant of Jehovah," Is. lii. 13-liii. (B. f. L. vol. ii. 417-425.)
"The New Jerusalem," Is. lx-lxi. (B. f. L. vol. ii. 437 8.)
"The Everlasting God," Is. xl. 9-31. (B. f. L. vol. ii. 429-431.)
"Our Father," Is. lxiii. 7-16.

22. Job: Its origin is one of the Bible-riddles: quite probably written about 400 B. C. See B. f. L. ii. 457-471.—**23. Deuteronomy** is pretty certainly "the book found in the Temple" at the beginning of King Josiah's Reformation, and almost as certainly was written at the time and ascribed to Moses in order to further the reform. 2 Kgs. xxii-xxiii. See B. f. L. ii. 326-337. It may be called the *Magna Charta* of Israel's Election by Jehovah and her National Constitution as drawn up by the Prophets of that time. Its key-note is Jehovah's love for his "chosen people," and his wrath against idolaters. Two noble verses in it (we took them for our Lesson text, p. 1) became the "creed" of Judaism. Matt. xxii. 36-40 and Luke x. 25-28. Show his day Jews used to wear these verses, with a few others, in a little leathern case ("phylactery") what Jesus thought of the creed: he added one other article to it, however, from Lev. xix. 18. In bound around their arms or foreheads: and still to-day some wear them; and sometimes they place the holy verses in a small tin case with a slit in it disclosing the name of God, and set the case in the right door-post of their living-rooms to remind them of their Jehovah's presence there. (Deut. vi. 4-9.)—**24. Closed.** For Jeremiah, see B. f. L. ii. 341-400. Ezekiel, 406-419; Isaiah, 419-434.—**25. Summits:** For a guide along these Isaiah-heights, see Matt. Arnold's "Great Prophecy of Israel's Restoration," Is. xl-lxvi, translated, with notes, as noble reading for school-children. Glowing chapters are Is. xl. xliv. xlix. liii lviii. lx. lxi. lxiii. lxv. Read them not as "Bible Chapters," but as the real heart-throbs of a captive patriot and poet; read till you can fit to each poem its true title for yourself.—**26. Two Israels:** In his character, his fate, and his influence Jesus so closely fulfilled Is. liii. that Christians have always fancied that the Prophet, writing about 550 B. C., *meant* him. All through the Old Testament Prophets the italicized chapter-headings in our English Bible, inserted by the English translators, mislead readers in the same way by referring the meanings to "Christ" and "his Church." The New Testament itself is full of the mistake, and Jesus doubtless shared this error of his time. To day's "Second Adventists" spend their hopes and calculations on a very similar mistake. But many a man *does* fulfil a prophecy that was never meant for him. Is. liii is a great poet's early glimpse of that law of history, called by the doctrine-makers "Vicarious Atonement," of which Jesus on his cross is one of the grandest illustrations. Possibly it was this very chapter that planted in Jesus' mind the thought that the nation's expected Christ must be a lowly-hearted sufferer, not a king: in this light, as a Christ-shaper, is not the chapter at least as interesting as it actually had been a prophecy of him?

New Books.—"*The River and the Other Side*," a pamphlet published at the office of the *Manford Magazine*, Chicago and St. Louis, containing the following discussions: 1. Immortal Life, by Theodore Parker, Unitarian; 2. To Die is Gain, by W. H. Murray, Congregationalist; 3. Universal Salvation, by E. Manford; 4. The Mortal and the Immortal, by Chauncey Giles, Swedenborgian. Single copies 10 cts.; twelve copies $1.00.

The Faith of Reason, by J. W. Chadwick. Another suggestive and most readable volume of discourses from this pen just out. Timely discussions of God, Immortality, Prayer and Morals, with two introductory discourses on Agnostic Religion and the Nature of Religion. While the sermons delivered from Sunday to Sunday can be transformed into literature so fascinating as this, the pulpit is not outgrown. *William Lloyd Garrison and His Times*, by Oliver Johnson, and Introduction by Whittier, will be ready for the holiday trade.

Fairfield, Iowa.—The essay so much enjoyed at the Keokuk Conference, by Ward Lamson, Esq., on *Self-Worship*, is published in pamphlet form. In an appendix he thus states the duty of the laity to free the clergy.

"While the clergy live by clothing the thought, faith and feeling of the laity with speech, it is a source of pain to the thoughtful and well-disposed preacher, to be compelled to array the poorest thought and feeling in the best garments. To perpetrate this lie is to do violence to the cultivated preacher's heaven-born conscience.

"To free the clergy from this degrading servility, the laity must assert their own liberty, to cease from worshipping old degrading *conceptions* of God, *as* God.

"The layman who has won wealth through obedience to industrial and financial laws, instead of piling up more gold, to hire priests to perpetuate degrading conceptions of God from darker ages, should take time to win health of mind and heart through obedience to the mental and moral laws, for higher and higher conceptions of God for human good. And such care for fellow-creatures is not only the best service of a Good Creator, but it is the most enjoyable phase of our human nature."

It is to be hoped that Christianity is stronger and God more successful than Mr. Moody represents. Chicago is called a Christian city; yet Mr. Moody has just said that if Jesus should come to it, "there is not a ward in this city but would say we do not want Him. They would all vote against Him. Does the Republican party want Him? No; He would be the last man they would want. They would blackball Him very quick. You know they would not have Him in the party. Does the Democratic party want Him? What would it do with Him? You haven't got a political party that wants Him. They would all hoot Him out. Their cry would be, 'Who is God, that we should obey Him?' That would be the cry to-day all up and down this country, and you may go to England, and you will not find it much better there. Let a man get up in the English Parliament and talk about a personal Christ, and he would be hooted down as quick as a man would in Congress. Go through France, and you will find the same state of things there. In fact there is not any room in this world for the Son of God." After Christianity has been the dominant religion in all these lands so many centuries, this seems a poor result; worse yet that "there is not any room in the world" for Him who, Mr. Moody says, created it.

D. N. Utter in the *Unitarian Advocate*, finely states the "Rational Religious Views,"—among them the following: "They (the rational people) think that the Bible contains a revelation of God's will in the same sense in which every other book contains a revelation, in the sense in which every tree or flower or thing is an expression of his will; and that though not inspired in the sense of being supernaturally produced, and providentially kept free from all errors and mistakes, it is inspired in the sense in which Job used the word when he says: 'There is a Spirit in man and the inspiration of the Almighty gives him understanding.' They think that the morality of the New Testament is the best that the world has seen or produced; but they also see that moral principles are eternal, inhere in the nature of men and things, and thus are neither invented nor revealed, but simply seen by all who reflect upon such subjects. They believe that the chief value of religion is not in preparing men to die but in fitting them to live. It was a misinterpretation of Christianity that made it seem to pertain altogether to the life to come, and practically disregard the life that now is. The best preparation for death and the eternal future is the best life now, and this not so much in prayer-meeting fashion, as in activity in worldly enterprises that benefit mankind.

CHRISTMAS! - UNITY GIFTS!!

In packing the bag of St. Nicholas, we trust *Unity* readers will remember that a gift is valuable in proportion as the joy it gives is perpetual, and a thing of sense is above all things most suitable. To aid in such a selection we append the following hints, earnestly commending them to Christmas-Tree Committees, parents, *Unity* subscribers, and Santa Claus' agents in general. The following or any other Books and Cards in the market can be ordered from Unity Headquarters, 75 Madison Street, Room 57, Chicago, Ill.:

WHAT TO GIVE.

1. TO INQUIRERS.

Studies of Christianity. James Martineau.....$1 25
Discourse of Religion. Theodore Parker. Cloth..... 1 50
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Unitarian Affirmations. Cloth..... 50
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Childhood of the World. Clodd 50
Essentials and Non-Essentials of Religion. James Freeman Clarke..... 50
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Photographs of Channing—Card 20c.; Cabinet 30c.; Life Size $5.

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4. GOOD FOR ALL CLASSES.

Channing's Works. New and complete edition.....$ 1 00
Freedom, Fellowship and Character in Religion. Vol. 1 of Unity. [The Pamphlet Mission.] Containing Discourses by Messrs. Collyer, Frothingham, Thomas, Savage, Clark, Simmons, Snyder, Chadwick, Gannett, Forbush and others. Neatly bound and indexed 50
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No better present can be made to the thoughtful and inquiring than the above two volumes, unless it be a subscription to Unity for 1880. It will visit your friend fortnightly with its helpful word for Freedom, Fellowship and Character in Religion throughout the year, for..... 1 50

WHOM TO GIVE TO.

Let not your Christmas love be narrow. Let your prayer be broader than that of him who prayed, "O Lord, bless me and my wife, my son John and his wife—us four and no more.—Amen." But remember needy causes as well as needy persons—worthy institutions as well as worthy individuals. If *Unity* and its associate industries at 75 Madison St., the propagation of Liberal ideas, and the publication of better helps for Liberal Sunday-Schools enlist your sympathy, see to it that the Christmas Tree, particularly if your life has been prospered, bear evidences of your good will. We look for your Holiday co-operation. We want to put *Unity* into the Reading-Rooms of 100 different Schools and Colleges in the West, where it will greet the eyes of the best young men and women of the oncoming generation. For this purpose we will furnish *Unity* at $1.25 per annum. Who will give us $125? Above all, let our Churches and Sunday-Schools remember their obligations at Christmas-time, a portion of which is suggested by what follows—the acknowledgment of Receipts and Treasurer Shippen's note.

ST. LOUIS, 417 Pine, Dec. 8, 1879.

Editor of Unity, 75 Madison St., Chicago:

Please acknowledge receipt of recent contributions to the Western Unitarian Conference, from

First Unit'n Society of Buffalo, per Rev. G. W. Cutter, $50 00
Church of the Messiah, Chicago, per M. B. Hull, Treasurer, a second installment this year of 100 00
First Unitarian Church of Laporte, Ind., per Rev. J. H. Crooker.....10 00
Unitarian Church of Kenosha, Wis., per Z. G. Simmons, 35 00

The bills of the Secretary, for the first and second quarters' salary and expenses, have been promptly paid on presentation. For efficient work money is necessary, and prompt payment is important to maintain our credit and self-respect. It is to be hoped that by January 1st a large list of contributions, small as well as large, will be ready for acknowledgment.

JOSEPH SHIPPEN, *Treas.*

RECEIPTS FOR UNITY.—Dr. E. H. Townsend $1.50, Lewis Vincent 1.50, O. F. Conklin 1.13, Rev. Henry C. De Long 1.50, Mrs. R. E. Clark 1.50, Julia Tanner 1.50, Thos. A. Greene 1.50, Miss Ellen Page 1.50, Rev. C. A. Bartol 2.00, C. Covell 1.25, F. A. Faulkner 1.50, A. L. Kellogg 1 50, Alanson Dibble 1.50, C. W. Allen 1.25, O. P. Hale 1.25, Mrs Hannah Davison 1.25, E. T. Wolcott 1.25, M. A. Baker 1.25, G. Simmons (donation) 50 00.